

Activity ideas

Feel good factors III

Three more activities and discussion ideas, exploring aspects of mental health and wellbeing.

1 Runaround game

Aim: to initiate discussion on health (or other) issues.

You will need: to select a number of topics and debating points (see below) on 'post-its' or similar, which can be stuck to people's backs.

Stick a statement on the back of each participant. Each person then has to guess the health topic on their own back by asking questions of others – who can only answer 'yes' or 'no'. Once the general topic has been guessed, group members sit down with the person who gave them the final clue and they discuss their statements for two minutes. Participants can devise their own topics and statements for a second game.

Ten suggested themes and statements:

- Smoking: Smoking is the responsibility of individuals and not of society.
- Stress: Young people today have more stress in their lives than previous generations.
- Food: All youth clubs should give people the choice of healthy food on sale in their coffee bars.
- Fitness: Physical fitness is important to our well-being.
- Environment: We all need a healthy environment to develop and thrive.
- Alternative Medicine: Alternative therapies are an important aspect of health choices.
- Relationships: Families are not the only support network available to individuals.
- Well-being: Being happy with yourself is the key to making the right choices in your life.
- Drugs: Legal drugs are as risky a choice as illegal ones as a way of helping us relax.
- Diet: It's not worth bothering what we eat, we get too many conflicting messages from 'experts'.

2 Around the block

Aim: to explore the responsibilities of caring and the importance of trust.

Prepare the group to go out for a stroll around the block/centre, half of the group being blindfolded and wearing ear-plugs to block out the stress of the day. Each blindfolded person must be led by one other in a safe, caring way. Reverse roles and on your return discuss which was the most comfortable for each other. Did caring for another feel more relaxing than not having distractions? Did you feel out of control?

3 Feelgood friends

Aim: to explore what is important in friendship.

You will need: copies of the *Friendship scoring chart* (below)

Ask the group to fill in the Friendship scoring chart on their own. They can then discuss their own results in pairs, small group or in the whole group. Were there any common factors? What ideas did group members come up with? Are there any important areas of disagreement about what's important in a friend?

Friendship scoring chart

What does 'friendship' mean to you?

Here are some of the things you might look for in a friend. Give each aspect of friendship a score out of ten in terms of how important it is to you.

A friend is someone who will...

- spend time with me.
- talk about the tv programmes they watch.
- not get me in to trouble
- help me with my school work.
- encourage me.
- have the same hobbies and interests as me.
- listen to my problems.
- introduce me to other friends.
- keep any secrets
- lend me things.
- tell me what to do.
- be honest.
- do what I say.
- make me laugh.

Pick 3 or 4 things that you scored highest and think of some more yourself. Copy them out and compare them with other people's views about friends.

The activities are adapted from material in the *Accreditation Toolkit*, available from the UK Youth storefront. <http://stores.lulu.com/ukyouth>